



# InStep

A Newsletter for Role Models

## Stepping Stones: Taking the Next Step

Stepping Stones has a proven track record as an effective teaching tool in junior high schools. The positive response to Stepping Stones shows that teachers and students consider the program both popular and important.

Stepping Stones' success is due in large part to the competence, creativity, and warmth demonstrated by you, the volunteer role models.

The program has steadily grown since it was first tested in the Edmonton area in 1988. In 1989 it became available in Calgary, and this year it has expanded to both junior and senior high schools and to an additional 21 communities across Alberta.

It is an exciting time for everyone who has contributed to Stepping Stones' success, as it is for those who will now be offered this program for the first time. I look forward to our role models "shaking things up" across the province once again this spring.

Now more young women and men in more communities will be shown first-hand that many and varied career paths are open to them. The message is clear; career choice isn't limited by one's gender.

This issue of InStep looks at recent developments in the Stepping Stones program, and provides some background which may be helpful to new role models. A sample *Visitation Report Card*, which role models will now be asked to fill out after classroom presentations, is included. In

addition, we pass on a few of the many positive comments we have received from educators about role models and the Stepping Stones program.

Role model participation, support, and suggestions play a crucial part in the current and future success of Stepping Stones. Your active interest in tomorrow's workers is creating both current and future benefits, and your commitment is very much appreciated.



Thank you.

Elaine McCoy, Q.C.  
Minister Responsible for  
Women's Issues

## Did You Know ?

- Rosella Bjornson, a Stepping Stones role model, has become the first female captain of a commercial airplane in Canada, a Boeing 737. Her promotion comes after 26 years as a pilot. In 1973 she became the first women ever hired as a commercial pilot by a Canadian airline. Now as captain, she has the ultimate responsibility for decision-making in the cockpit. Rosella's next goal is to become a captain of a 747 or 767, which fly overseas.
- 1990 marked the 20th Anniversary of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. The establishment of this Commission became a watershed event in the development of women's programs across Canada, and led to the creation of both the Alberta Women's Secretariat and the Alberta Advisory Council on Women's Issues.
- Only 11 percent of Alberta husband-wife families are supported by the husband's paycheque alone.
- Between 40 and 50 percent of Alberta law school grads are female, but women still make up only 20 percent of the lawyers in practice in Canada.

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# What are They Saying About Us?

"It is a difficult challenge for teachers to find the most current information on any given career. I have found that students find it much more meaningful and impressive to meet with the role models who work directly in a field. Stepping Stones role models have impressed me with their warmth and interest in the students."

*Gerry McGuire,  
an Edmonton Grade 8 teacher at  
McKernan Junior High School*

"We need to break open those old stereotypes that restrict career choices, in particular for young women. Stepping Stones shows girls that others have done it, and so can they."

*Bert Morrison, a teacher at St. Cyril  
Junior High in Calgary*

"The role models' knowledge and personal experiences carry a lot of weight with students, because only they can really say what it has been like to have faced the challenges and difficulties along the way."

*Eamonn Rutledge, a teacher at Brebeuf  
Junior High in Calgary*

"To some students it (presentations by non-traditional role models) is a big shock and to others it's no big deal.

We are obviously right in the middle of some significant changes."

*Charles Stuart, Vice-Principal of St.  
Thomas More Junior High in Edmonton*

"Role models have always been very eager (to make presentations) and have stressed that they'd like to be called on more often. They look back to when they were inspired by someone in the past and want to pass on that inspiration."

*Lona Ani, teacher at Grandview Heights  
Junior High in Edmonton*

"Our school jurisdiction strongly promotes the theme partnership in education. Stepping Stones encourages partnerships between schools, local businesses and working role models. I think it will be a very good addition to our curriculum."

*John Doi, Deputy Superintendent of the  
Camrose City Public School District, on  
the expansion of Stepping Stones  
to Camrose*

"Students will be able to question and interact directly with role models, which will inject a strong dose of reality into our careers curriculum."

*Bob Carter, Superintendent of Redcliff  
Public School District,  
on the expansion of the program*

# Step by Step: A Progress Report

Stepping Stones has been offered to Calgary- and Edmonton-area junior high schools since 1989.

On November 7th, 1990, as part of Career Week, the Honourable Elaine McCoy, Minister Responsible for Women's Issues, announced that Stepping Stones would be offered to an additional 21 communities across the province.

The new communities were picked based on considerations of program budgeting, local school board approval, the student populations in each area, and the expected availability of sufficient numbers of role-model volunteers.

With the Career Week announcement, Stepping Stones will now be available to more than 300 schools.

The Minister also announced that role models will now be invited to address senior high Career and Life Management (CALM 20) classes, in addition to junior high classes.

Role models may be interested to know that the following resource materials which support the Stepping Stones program have been recently updated:

- The *Role Model Information Kit* explains the program to volunteer role models, provides information on changing social and labour force trends, and helps role models prepare for classroom presentations.
- The *Teacher Information Kit* helps teachers prepare classes for role model presentations and discussions.
- The *Role Model Registry* provides teachers with a list and background information about role models in their community.
- There is also a new *Stepping Stones* brochure which provides an overview of the Stepping Stones program. These updated materials reflect recent changes to the program, and more aggressively market Stepping Stones. Role models and teachers have greatly assisted with these revisions. It is important that Stepping Stones maintains a high profile with teachers, in order to ensure that role models are invited to as many classrooms as possible.

## Stepping Stones Visitation Report Card

Beginning this year, Stepping Stones role models will be asked to complete and mail postage paid cards after conducting Stepping Stones presentations. The information supplied by role models will help the Women's Secretariat monitor the program, and focus its promotional efforts.

We would very much appreciate your participation. We have kept the detail of the report card to a minimum, in order that it will be as convenient as possible to fill out. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the card, please let us know. A small supply of blank cards will be sent to each role model by mail.

### The Visitation Report Card looks like this:

Name of Role Model: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Presentation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

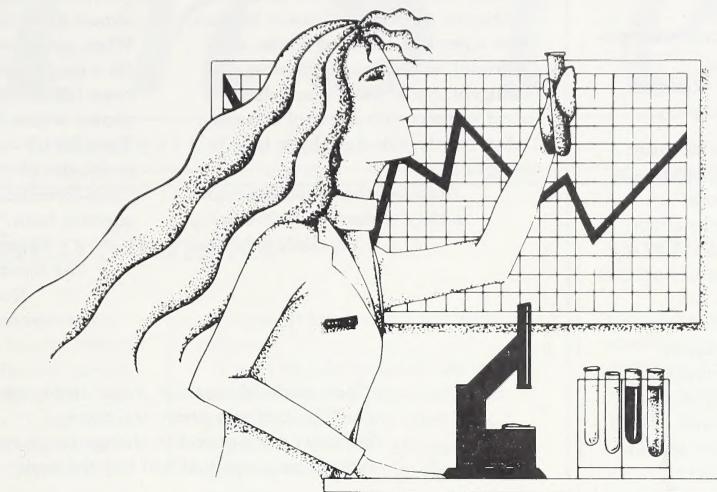
Number of Students: \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Thanks for your help!

The following advertisement is one in a series that is running in the ATA Magazine during this winter and spring.

"Stepping Stones is going places" introduces Stepping Stones to teachers in communities where the program is being offered for the first time, and reintroduces and promotes Stepping Stones to teachers in Calgary and Edmonton.



## *Stepping Stones is going places!*

Informed choices. Considering all the options. Gender-free career decisions. Stepping Stones helps students prepare for careers in tomorrow's workplace.

The Stepping Stones role model program is an optional resource for the junior high health and the CALM 20 curricula. Already successful in Edmonton and Calgary, Stepping Stones is now expanding to additional Alberta communities.

Local women who work in occupations traditionally dominated by men will now be available to make classroom presentations to students in Airdrie, Camrose, CFB-Lancaster Park, Devon, Fort

McMurray, Fort Saskatchewan, Grande Prairie, High River, Leduc, Lethbridge, Lloydminster, Medicine Hat, Okotoks, Redcliff, Red Deer, Rocky Mountain House, Sherwood Park, Spruce Grove, St. Albert, Stony Plain, and Wetaskiwin.

Help your students get in step with the future, use Stepping Stones.

Contact the Stepping Stones Coordinator at the **Alberta Women's Secretariat in Edmonton**, **422-4927**, if you would like more information.

**Alberta**  
WOMEN'S SECRETARIAT



# Glad You Asked That!

## 1) How is a non-traditional occupation defined?

It is an occupation where under a third of the workers are women.

## 2) Does Stepping Stones devalue women in traditional occupations and stay-at-home mothers?

Not at all. Stepping Stones is about choices, and expanding horizons. It builds up and promotes career options free of gender bias, and is not concerned with tearing down any person or choice of occupation. Students have already encountered women in traditional roles; Stepping Stones brings them into contact with those they are less likely to meet in the course of their daily lives.

## 3) Why is Stepping Stones only available in select communities?

The 23 communities have been targeted in order to offer Stepping Stones to the largest possible number of students. Consideration is also given to the availability of sufficient numbers of non-traditional role models in each area. School boards are contacted by the Minister Responsible for Women's Issues, the Honourable Elaine McCoy, and encouraged to adopt the program, then school system administrators and trustees have the final say in making Stepping Stones available.

## 4) Why is Stepping Stones offered to only junior and senior high school students?

This is the most effective time to introduce the program. Stepping Stones influences junior high students before they select courses in high school which can affect their future career choices.

CALM is now a required high school course, and for many students CALM 20 is the first time they have thought about future careers in a formal setting. It is important to promote Stepping Stones' message of gender-free career choices to high school students and help them recognize career options and what is required to achieve various choices.

# Need We Say More?

"I asked my students in the seventies to describe a successful career woman. Their adjectives included single, cold (or frigid), masculine, aggressive and intelligent. No wonder researchers found women with a fear of success. Unfortunately, this stereotype hasn't changed much."

*Nola Seymoar, psychotherapist  
in the October 31, 1990 issue of  
the Globe and Mail*

"Toys requiring manipulation are almost the entire province of boys. When girls are shown with such toys (in a magazine) the actual toy has been feminized. For example a boy is shown with a Big Wheel tricycle, the "Baja Blazer — with the competitive look"; the girls' counterpart is the "Mini-Sweetheart — with a daisy squeeze horn."

*Laurel Walum Richardson in  
The Dynamics of Sex and Gender,  
Houghton Mifflin Co. 1981,  
on her review of a major store  
chain's catalogue*

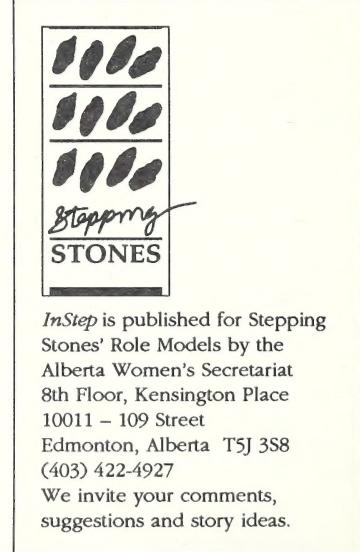
"She's made of sunshine, sugar and spice  
She'll be pert and pretty and nice  
Someday she's bound to change her name  
Now choose one that will stay the same

The name that polls the winning vote  
The famous name that makes up quotes  
The name thousands will employ  
May be the name you name your boy."

*3500 Names for Baby, Dell Publishing 1969*

## Let us Know! Role model feedback

We would like to hear from you, the role model. How is Stepping Stones being received? What presentation techniques have worked well for you? Has anything funny happened to you on the road to enlightening others? Send us your suggestions or opinions so we can share them with other role models through the *InStep* newsletter.



*InStep* is published for Stepping Stones' Role Models by the Alberta Women's Secretariat 8th Floor, Kensington Place 10011 - 109 Street Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3S8 (403) 422-4927 We invite your comments, suggestions and story ideas.